May 7, 2014

The Honorable Kevin Cotter
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Chairman Cotter:

I write to you in support of House Bills 5404-5407, which address administering an opioid antidote to individuals who overdose. This legislation will aid in combating the effects that heroin has had on all of our communities by potentially saving the lives of individuals who may have taken this dangerous narcotic.

Law enforcement agencies and multi-jurisdictional drug task forces around the state are working together to decrease heroin usage and prevent the narcotics from reaching the streets and into the hands of vulnerable individuals. Unfortunately, heroin users continue to obtain this drug and often use it in lethal doses. By allowing first responders to carry an opioid antidote, overdose victims may have a second chance.

While the current bills before you do not address allowing law enforcement officers to be prescribed and carry the opioid antidote, I am currently working with the bill sponsors to see that my Deputies, and officers across the state, are able to carry this lifesaving tool should their agency choose to train and provide officers with the necessary equipment. On many occasions, law enforcement is the first to arrive at the scene before emergency medical responders, and by allowing officers to carry and administer the drug, precious minutes are saved while waiting for emergency medical responders.

I applaud the efforts of both the House and Senate for addressing this public safety issue. By allowing this lifesaving antidote to be carried by first responders, those battling addiction will be able to be given another chance to live and find a better path.

If you should have any questions about this or any other law enforcement issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Bouchard
Oakland County Sheriff